

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections contained in the Office Action of January 23, 2004 is respectfully requested.

Claims 10-24, including independent claims 10, 15, and 22, are presently pending in this application. In this regard, the Examiner has rejected claims 10, 11, 13-16, and 19-21 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Fuller reference (USP 1,071,042) in view of the Onuma Koji reference (JP 63228941A); and has rejected claims 12, 17, 18, and 22-24 as being unpatentable over the Fuller reference in view of the Onuma Koji reference, and further in view of the Nakano reference (USP 6,429,562). However, the claims have now been amended as indicated above. For the reasons discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that the amended claims are now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is requested to note that the Nakano reference qualifies as prior art under 35 USC § 102(e), and has an effective date (a U.S. filing date) of December 8, 2000. On the other hand, the present application has a priority date of November 7, 2000, which is earlier than the effective date of the Nakano reference. A certified copy of the Japanese priority document 2000-339199 (with the filing date of November 7, 2000) was filed on November 6, 2001, thus perfecting the Applicants' claim for priority.

As explained in MPEP chapter 201.15, because the priority date of the present application is earlier than the effective date of the Nakano reference, the Applicants can overcome the Nakano reference by filing a verified English translation of the Japanese priority document. Consequently, a verified translation of the priority document has been prepared and submitted herewith, and it is submitted that the priority document fully supports the subject matter recited in claims 10-24. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the Nakano reference.

As noted above, the Examiner has rejected independent claim 22 in view of a combination of references including the Nakano reference. Thus, in view of the withdrawal of the Nakano reference, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 22 and the claims that depend therefrom are now in condition for allowance. Furthermore, the Examiner has also rejected dependent claims 12 and 17 in view of a combination of references including the Nakano reference. Consequently,

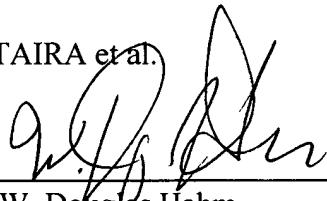
dependent claim 12 and intervening claim 11 have now been incorporated into independent claim 10, and dependent claim 17 has now been incorporated into independent claim 15. Therefore, in view of the withdrawal of the Nakano reference, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claims 10 and 15, and the claims that depend therefrom, are also in condition for allowance.

Finally, it is noted that previously presented claims 22 and 24 describe that the motors are connected in parallel to a common power circuit to supply an exciting *current* to the stator winding of each of the motors. It is noted that one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that this exciting current will produce a voltage at the motors.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner should have any comments or suggestions to help speed the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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